

6-2723

OGC 61-0563

6 April 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

**SUBJECT: Defense Posture Hearings Before Senate
Armed Services Committee - 5 April
1961 - Afternoon Session**

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. During the afternoon of 5 April, General Lemnitzer presented his prepared posture statement attempting to discuss the Soviet military posture vis-a-vis the U. S. military posture. General Lemnitzer pointed out that his statement included both TOP SECRET material and TOP SECRET RESTRICTED DATA and that there would be no unclassified version available. As a preliminary to his prepared statement he pointed out that the intelligence on the Soviet military strength was based on the work of the entire intelligence community but indicated that we never had enough intelligence on all phases of the program.
3. General Lemnitzer presented three basic slides on the ICBM program. The first dealt with the Soviet program giving the upper and lower limits of the current estimate. On the second slide the three illustrative programs were marked and General Lemnitzer carefully explained the position of each of the intelligence components and their reasoning. The third slide was basically the second slide with the U. S. program superimposed. Senator Saltonstall inquired what was based on hard evidence and what was based on soft evidence. General Lemnitzer indicated that with respect to the question of production and deployment the evidence is fragmentary and equivocal but as to the testing program, range, and CEP he would consider the evidence as hard.

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4. Senator Symington queried the longer reaction time attributed to the Soviet missiles as compared with U. S. missiles. General Lemnitzer went off the record to explain how we followed their activity with electronic aids. Senator Cannon asked the question of why the Soviet ICBM was credited with a range of 6500 nautical miles when in fact they have exhibited capability to shoot for longer distances. General Lemnitzer gave no answer to this, simply saying that this was what the estimate was. In view of the wide spread in the estimates, Senator Russell asked what was the Joint Chiefs of Staff view and could not they come to any specific conclusion from the varying views. General Lemnitzer stated that as planners they had to take into account the entire range as indicated by the estimate without attempting to decide whether one component of the community was right and another was wrong. Lemnitzer did indicate that this subject was under current review with the hope that the range in the views could be narrowed.

5. Discussion then turned to Cuba. Senator Symington referred to Senator Smathers' statement that there is "irrefutable evidence that missile bases are being built in Cuba". General Lemnitzer at first stated that the current intelligence estimate is that there is no positive evidence that there are jet aircraft, nuclear weapons or missile bases in Cuba. In discussing it further, Lemnitzer stated "there is no positive evidence that missile sites are being constructed according to the intelligence agencies." General Lemnitzer stated that the situation is getting worse in Cuba and that time is not on our side. He mentioned the recent actions whereby the Cuban refugees had selected Verona as a provisional president. General Lemnitzer was then asked the legal effect of a U. S. blockade of Cuba. He stated it was his understanding that this would mean war. He was asked his personal view on what should be done with Cuba. General Lemnitzer stated that his personal view was that he would like to see Cuba isolated and insulated. Senator Russell then stated that he believed that as soon as it became apparent that Cuba was Communist dominated we should have invoked the Monroe Doctrine. He was very strong in his views on this and was joined by Senators Case, Symington, Thurmond and Bush. In fact, Senator Bush requested that there be inserted in the record his resolution introduced in January 1960 calling for a Senate Foreign Relations Committee to hold hearings to determine if there had been a violation of the Monroe Doctrine.

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6. Senator Symington raised specific questions concerning the estimates on Soviet fighter strength for this year as compared with last year asking about the decrease and why these changes were made. He also queried the difference in bomber figures. In the context of the discussion at this point, General Lemnitzer did not respond to these specific points.

7. General Lemnitzer was asked about Laos and he gave a general background briefing of the situation in Laos going back to the Geneva Convention. Senator Symington inquired whether or not we had the capability of conducting limited war in Laos if the Communist Chinese intervened. General Lemnitzer indicated this would create a very serious problem although he did state that under the current situation probably we had the capability of seizing the principal communications and control points in Laos but we would be left with a guerrilla warfare problem.

8. General Lemnitzer had presented a quantitative-type chart on the forces available to NATO which caused considerable discussion since upon questioning he agreed that the figures did not represent the true strength of the NATO forces. For example, he had included on a quantitative basis the French divisions which are in fact in Algeria.

c/ John S. Warner
JOHN S. WARNER
Legislative Counsel

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